THE NETWORKER

ISA, PCI, Electronic Signature and CEFMS

Card Readers

Robert L. Evans
CEHEC-IM

ISA (Industry Standard Architecture) computer boards have been in computers since the early 1980's. These boards fit into ISA slots on the computer's motherboard. The new computer board standard, PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect) is faster than ISA, and self-configuring. The PCI standard has existed since 1993. In new computers, the video and network computer boards are all using the PCI standard. The electronic signature card reader that the Corps uses connects into an ISA computer board (Argus 300).

On 6 August 1998 Microsoft and Intel released a computer specification called PC99 (512 pages). This

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SOME OF THE GOOD STUFF

GRASS ROOTS CONGRESSMAN CHATS WITH A FORMER HOMETOWN CONSTITUENT REGARDING Y2K

Y2K Compliance

Jeane D. Williams
CEHEC-IM

Disclaimer: The opinions of

Congressman Donald M. Payne, and Jeane D. Williams do not reflect those of the US Congress or the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Native New Jerseyan, Jeane D. Williams, the HQUSACE/HECSA Y2K Project Manager, talked with Congressman Donald M. Payne, (New Jersey's 10th District) to share his thoughts regarding the "Big Black Hole" referred to as: Y2K.

It wasn't by coincidence that she met Congressman Donald Payne. He was a mentor to her while growing up in New Jersey. Congressman Payne, as a widower raised his children, yet he still had time to become involved with the YMYWCA, and become a role model in the community.

Congressman Payne is a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, where he serves on the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families and Employer-Employee Relations. He is also a member of the International Relations Committee and its

specification stated that all new computer models after January 1, 2000 could not have ISA slots. PC manufacturers have to meet these specifications if the want the Microsoft logo sticker on their computers.

Computer manufacturers are now selling some computers without ISA slots. The CEFMS electronic signature hardware can not be installed in these PCs. When you are ordering new PCs, you need to specify that the computer has an ISA slot. There are two options if you order a new PC without an ISA slot. You can purchase a Signet device and software driver ($498 from Gradkell Computers) to put your existing electronic signature board into. Signet is a black box with a keyboard on top that connects to your PC's printer port. The second option is still under development. Litronic, Inc., is working on a PCI version of the Argus 300. We do not know what the price of the PCI version will be. The current ISA version of the Argus 300 board costs about $400. We will notify you when the PCI version is released.

DNS

DNS (Domain Naming Service) is a behind the scene process that connects you to other computers. DNS is the database and process of converting domain names (i.e. www.hq.usace.army.mil) into Internet protocol (IP) numbers (i.e. 155.75.38.204) and IP numbers to domain names. DNS name servers store pieces of the DNS database, and know how to lookup what they don't know. We have DNS name servers located in the Pulaski and Kingman buildings. These name servers store host computer names for the hq.usace.army.mil, hecsa.usace.army.mil, and wrsc.usace.army.mil domains; and all IP addresses for 155.75.x.x. When your Outlook starts, or you use Netscape or Signaterm to connect to a computer in one of these domains, your PC queries one of our local name servers. The DNS server converts the computer's name into an IP address. The IP address is then returned to your PC. Your PC then connects to the computer using the IP address it got from the name server.

If you connect to computers outside these three domains (i.e. cehq-cefms.usace.army.mil, www.army.mil, and www.cnn.com) the DNS server queries the root Internet name servers to locate the name server(s) for that domain. The local name server may have to make multiple queries as it goes through the different levels in the domain. Once our name server resolves the IP address, it stores it in its local cache, and sends the IP address to your computer. Your computer then uses the IP address to make the connection. You then see the login prompt or Web page.

The Army copies our domain databases to their name servers. When a computer outside our network (i.e. www.microsoft.com, www.nad.usace.army.mil) tries to resolve a computer name or IP address in one of our three domains, the Army's name server resolves the query using its local copy. When our name servers need to resolve an Army computer name outside of our three domains (i.e. www.usace.army.mil, cehq-cefms.usace.army.mil, www.army.mil), it goes to the Army's name server.

FREE INTERNET SERVICE

Internet Service Providers Who Don't Charge

David J. Walton, Sr.
CEHEC-IM

Last spring, a very dear friend sent me an e-mail message detailing free e-mail service. I immediately became suspect. It seems that every free thing on the Internet has a string attached to it that costs money. I left the e-mail message opened on my e-mail service. I usually delete things this type of e-mail. I guess that I couldn't resist the hook called free service. I danced around the message for weeks before I reopened it. When I did reopen the message, I clicked on the hyperlink. It took me to http://www.netzero.com immediately. Still suspect, I read the page slowly and carefully. I paged through the site and ready everything. Money was not mentioned. I was armed and ready to run from the money bears as soon as they raised their nasty heads by clicking off the site. No bears showed up. I decided to give it a try. I read the

instructions and downloaded the software. I was pleasantly surprised to find that the site does provide free Internet service. At the time, I was paying $19.95 per month to one of the major Internet Service Providers (ISP). I now pay $24.95 per month. So, the idea of free Internet service is one that appeals to my checkbook and me. I did find that there are drawbacks to the free service. First, response seems to be slower than the pay-for-service providers. Next, the free service provider has a very annoying advertisement banner that remains resident across the top fifth of the screen. If you try to eliminate the banner, the software notifies you that the advertisement banner must be displayed at all times. Then, it knocks you off the system. Once, I accidentally eliminated the banner. It caused a major error that technical support couldn't resolve. I then had to reboot. The most annoying drawback is trying to get on the system in the evening. It is nearly impossible to sign on from 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM. If you do happen to get on, your response can be as slow as a turtle running through peanut butter. There are a couple more or so annoyances that pop up from time such as getting knocked off the net for no reason. (My pay-for-service provider has the same problem only not so often.) And, the service is not available everywhere. However, if it is available and all you do is read the news, check the weather, and read your e-mail while on the net, this might be the service for you. The providers are constantly upgrading their service. So, free Internet may soon be a viable option to pay for service providers.

There are other free ISP's out there on the web such as the service provided by Altavista, which can be found at http://microav.com/. You may want to give a try to see how it works for you. I know people who swear by the free service. I know others who think that it's not for them or anyone. If you spend a lot of time on the web, free Internet service may not be the best service. You will never know if you don't try it though.
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WORKSTATION SAFETY

Part 1

By Walt Bailey

In FY98, the HECSA Safety Office distributed a workstation survey in the form of a questionnaire. Approximately 1300 employees completed the survey and the information was placed in a database. The survey indicated that about 1/3 of the employees at HQ USACE and the HEC Complex are experiencing some sort of pain and/or discomfort while performing tasks associated with their computer workstations. This is about normal with the rest of DOD employees.

Pain and discomfort are indicators that something is not right. As we all continue to increase our time spent sitting in front of computers, to perform required work, we must start to look at this repetitious work differently. For many years, only administrative employees were exposed to these pains. Now all of us are performing an enormous amount of computer work. We are now our own administrative support.
        The cause of this pain and discomfort is not the position of the computer or the position at which we sit at computers or the amount of time we operate computers.

"WHAT?"   The computer is not at fault?

We cannot continue to pass the blame on to material things. Computers do not place themselves on desks that they don't fit on. Desks don't intentionally turn themselves into knee knockers. Video displays do not place themselves in the sunlight or on pedestals. Keyboards and pointing devices (read mouse) don't position themselves to place strain on the arms and wrists and chairs don't adjust themselves so that your feet are not flat on the floor.

We, the users, are at fault for our own pain and discomfort. We have chosen to improperly setup our workstation so that it fits on our improper furniture.

In the world of safety, all injuries and accidents are caused by human error. Material things and Mother Nature does not cause injuries or property damage.

For example, a jumbo jet is flying at 25,000 feet. A fuel-pump over heats and ignites fuel vapors in the fuel tank. The fuel tank ruptures, the wing breaks and the aircraft plummets to earth. All the people inside the aircraft are killed. Most of you will think that the over heated fuel pump caused the accident. "WRONG".   A fuel pump is a material thing. It cannot think, plan, or cause anything to occur.   In this case, the fuel pump was operated beyond its capabilities or was improperly installed or was sent the wrong voltage or was not replaced when required, by humans.   Some human error caused the fuel pump to over heat.

Pain and discomfort at your computer workstation is the direct result of human error.   Is it your error, management's error, or both?   Did you set up you own workstation wrong?   Have you taken the time to reposition your workstation so that it is ergonomically correct?   Are you sitting around waiting for someone to fix it for you? Have you reported workstation problems to your supervisor?   If you're a supervisor, have you ignored your employees' complaints about their workstations?

Next Issue: "How to Adjust a Workstation"
What part of your computer-working environment should you adjust first?

Note: We, the staff of THE NETWORKER, thank Mr. Walter Bailey for this article. It is informative and needed. We also thank Mr. Bailey because he supports this newsletter. Ed.

Subcommittee on Africa, where he holds the position of Ranking Member. A past Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, he is a member of the Democratic Whip Organization and has served as a member of the House Democratic Leadership Advisory Group.

Congressman Payne is a man that has never forgotten from whence he has come and that is why I am able to get this interview. He said he came to Congress to represent those people that can't speak for themselves… The Youth and the Senior Citizens but he takes the time to listen to everyone, not just hear…So let's hear what he had to say about the Y2K? Congressman Payne:

1.   How do you think Y2K will effect the Federal Government?

While there will probably be some glitches with Y2K compliance, I believe that overall the Federal Government is well prepared technologically for the Millennium. Efforts to meet the Y2K challenge have been underway since 1996, when the first congressional hearings on the subject were held. Funds have been allocated by Congress to assist federal agencies in converting their computer system to achieve Y2K compliance. In addition, under President Clinton's leadership, a Y2K Council has set up a Y2K Information Coordination Center which will coordinate responses by federal agencies, and state, local and private sector firms. Recently the Office of Management and Budget reported that 99% of the federal mission critical systems are Y2K compliant.

2.   Do you feel the major impact will be in the Washington DC area or in the smaller cities?

Because the Federal Government has been working aggressively to meet the Y2K challenge, I believe the Washington, DC area will have a successful transition. It may be more problematic for smaller cities, since a number of cities and county government Y2K efforts lag

behind those at the federal level.

3. How do you think Y2K will impact the Third World Countries, as the world becomes more diversified?

It will be more difficult for Third World nations to prepare for Y2K, but I am hopeful that they will succeed. As a member of the House Committee on International Relations, and as the highest ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Africa, I would like to see the people of Third World nations benefit from advances in computer technology. Independent reports have listed the nations most at risk for Y2K changes; among those are Liberia, Somalia, Belize, El Salvador and Bangladesh.

4. In your opinion, are there any sections of the Federal Government that are more vulnerable then others, and if so which agencies?

It is crucial that agencies, which deal with public safety responsibilities, such as air traffic control and medical services, be Y2K compliant. Equipment at government-run medical centers must be reliable. Additionally, agencies, which mail out retirement checks, including social security and veterans benefits, must be fully functional. Fortunately, most agencies have been given good ratings as far on Y2K readiness. For instance, the Social Security Administration has been given a grade of "A", as has the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The agencies receiving the lowest grades are the Agency for International Development and the Department of Defense, both of which received a "D" grade.

5. Rumor has it that Congress is going to reschedule some of the holidays, can you provide us any insight on this?

To my knowledge, there are no plans to reschedule federal holidays.

6. How important is the success of Y2K to the Federal Government, and why?

Obviously, the success of Y2K compliance is very important to the Federal Government. A smooth transition will ensure that functions of the government continue without undue disruption. Our overall economy will also be impacted by the success of our government's Y2K response. It is important for our nation's continued economic growth and stability that we avoid Y2K-related turmoil. It is worth noting that the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Alan Greenspan, recently expressed optimism about our state of preparedness for Y2K.

7. In the order of importance, where does the Y2K rank?

I think that Y2K ranks high on our list of priorities, because our readiness will impact so many aspects of our daily lives. As we draw closer to the New Year, the issue has become increasingly prominent.

8. Where do you feel the greatest impact will be felt, and why?

The greatest impact will probably be felt by businesses, which have not been able to adequately prepare for the Y2K conversion, since many managers underestimated the extent of the problem at first. Also, there may be some problems with cities and counties whose computers are not Y2K compliant, since information from local governments is transmitted to the Federal Government database for various purposes.

9. Is Congress prepared for Y2K Compliance?

Yes, Congress has been making long-term preparations for Y2K compliance. In addition to shaping a national plan to address the issue, in each congressional office we have taken steps to be sure our own computer systems are properly adjusted for Y2K.

10. With all the effort that has been expended "Pre-resolving "Y2K," do you think the Government is in good shape, or bad shape?

I think that the early steps we have taken have to anticipate Y2K problems before they arise will prove successful. As I said, it will be difficult to avoid all glitches. But the impact should be minimal.

11. If you could make one wish in the year 2000, what would it be?

My wish would be to ensure that every child has the opportunity to grow up happy, and healthy, to become well educated, to reach his or her full potential and to experience the wonder of the world surrounding us. If we can resolve technology-related problems, surely we can address the human problems, which take such a toll on our society.

I think I knew your answer would have something to do with children. Maybe someday at Christmas we will see a land with no hungry children, no empty hands, and one shiny morning we will share a world where people care. Congressman Payne, the US Army Corps of Engineers would like to thank you for returning my calls quickly, and taking the time out of your very busy schedule to talk with me. We appreciate your interest, and support.

THE HUMPHREYS ENGINEER CENTER SUPPORT ACTIVITY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT OFFICE IS EXPERIENCING GROWING PAINS.

Doing More With Less

Marlene Garlick
CEHEC-IM

In an era of declining resources and heightened customer demand for quality products at the most reasonable cost, the IM office remains in constant search of new improved ways to do business. One such approach has been to relocate the HECSA Support Branch (CEHEC-IM-S) and the LAN Help Desk Support Personnel to the ground floor of the Kingman building in rooms G1 and G8. The Mail Distribution Center (MDC) is also located on the ground floor in room G7. This move has afforded us the opportunity of servicing our customers from a central location.

The HQ and HECSA Web Master, Mr. Kevin Brooks, (703) 428-6023, is located in room G1 and is available to assist you in providing web page advise, guidance, and recommendations concerning the design, development and/or presentation of web pages. The Telecommunications Control Officer (TCO) is Mrs. Betty Francis, (703) 428-7000, and is located in room G1. She currently provides services to the 249th Engineer Battalion, Prime Power Engineer School, and HECSA. The CEFMS Signature Card Program (CSC) Manager is Mrs. Betty Francis, (703) 428-7000, and she is assisted by Mr. Loring Miller (703) 428-8656. Both are available during work hours to assist you with obtaining a smart card, reporting lost cards, turn-ins, locked cards, etc. Mr. John Fackelman, (703) 428-8234, is located in room G1 and sponsors the Toner Recycle Center and maintains a hardware maintenance contract that is available for repair service. Mr. Fackelman may also assist you in developing Government Specifications and cost estimates for IT purchases.

SPOTLIGHTING THIS MONTH:

CEHEC-IM-P: THE PROVIDERS

So You THINK You Know What We Do!!

But Do You Know Who We Are?

Jeane D. Williams

CEHEC-IM

The IMO provides operational level support for all Information Mission Area (IMA) responsibilities for the Headquarters, United States Army Corps of Engineers (HQUSACE) and HECSA. IMA encompasses Telecommunications, Automation, Visual Information Services, Records Management, Publishing and Printing, and Library Management. The IMO provides centralized Local Area Network (LAN) life cycle support to the various functional activities within the HQUSACE organization and HECSA. Networking support includes expertise in LAN/MAN/WAN based systems, applications, internal office automation, user training, and network systems integration.

Meet the HQUSACE, Pulaski Operations Information Management Team:

Carey Basala – "The LANder" LAN Administrator is the manager for your computer's connection to the world. Her responsibilities are to maintain the LAN, including managing the installation and upgrade of LAN equipment, centralized software, and Users PCs. She supports the CEHEC Helpdesk Contractors that handle the operation of the LAN, and she provides technical assistance to HQUSACE LAN users when needed. Her most important duty is to keep users informed of updates, policies, and changes that may effect the operation of the LAN. She also serves as the Information System Security Manager (ISSM), the PM for LAN Consolidation, and the backup Systems Administrator for EDMS. carey.basala@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-8767

David Butler – "The Dealer" maintains and operates the ADP Store currently located on the 4th floor. He receives all of HQUSACE excess Information Technology that is maintained on HQUSACE Property Book. Dave tests all equipment to determine if it should be disposed, or placed in inventory stock for the store. He schedules the use and access of Laptops and Notebooks for the "Loaner Program." **david.butler@usace.army.mil**, at (202) 761-0071.

Bob Evans - The **"Key Holder"** is the checkpoint for UPASS. He is responsible for the management of: Userids, IP Address, Remote Access, CEFMS Access, and Printing, Oracle Database Administration, and serves as the EDMS System Administrator. robert.evans@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-8758.

E. Dale Keenan - **"The Challenger"** is the Deputy Chief of Information Management for HECSA at the Pulaski Building. Dale supervises the HEC-IM Office Automation, Printing and Publishing, and Visual Information in support of HQUSACE. His expertise is used and shared throughout the USACE as he continues to create innovative paths. dale.keenan@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-8753.

Willie Mauldin – "The Communicator" is responsible for all Telecommunication Services within the HQUSACE Pulaski Building, and HQUSACE Personnel located at HEC, for phones cellular phones, and pagers. He's the man to CLICK UP. willie.mauldin@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-1569

Sandy Powers – "The Drill Sargent" makes things happen!! As the administrative supporter for CEHEC-IM-P she ensures that everything that comes across her desk, moves off of her desk, or she gets it done. She serves as the direct line secretary for the Deputy Chief, Information Management for Pulaski Operations. She serves as the Project Manager for the Laser Toner Exchange Program for HQUSACE and HECSA elements located at Pulaski. . She manages the Automation Support Branch property requirements for the Deputy CIM at Pulaski and provides liaison assistance for reporting requirements between the Chief, IMO, and the Deputy CIM. When needed she provides assistance to branch chiefs, and others that require additional support for special projects. sandy.powers@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-5305.

Jane Simons - The **"LOCK SMITH"** is the Technical Approver for all HQUSACE Information Technology PR&C. If your PR&C is in accordance with the regulations she'll unlock the gate and let your PR&C through. She is also the

Database Administrator for Oracle databases running NOS/VE and UNIX computers. She maintains the form templates for USACE Correspondence. In her spare time she provides guidance and subject matter expertise regarding LAN and WAN to users.
jane.simons@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-1417

Elaine Upson – "The IM Doctor" for the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC). She provides support to the CPAC regarding Information Technology matters such as: software installation, managing the CPAC server, resolves hardware and software issues. Elaine serves as the POC for the Personnel Processing Improvement (PPI) System for the HQUSACE, HECSA, and 249TH Engineer Battalion. She provides broad shoulders for the CPAC Specialist when they become "STRESSED OUT." The only question is, is this by appointment only?
elaine.upson@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-5308.

Earl Wade – "The Team Member" of the EDMS system. Currently he is interviewing Directorates and Offices at HQUSACE to identify their business process regarding Records Management. He also reviews their paper flow of documents and recommends alternatives.
earl.wade@usace.army.mil, at (202) 761-0708.

David J. Walton, Sr. – "Mr. C." We call him "Mr. C." because he is the COR for the LAN support contract. He is the guy to call or E-mail if you have a question about the LAN and desktop support that you are receiving from the Contractor staff. He is responsible for ensuring that the contractor completes all agreed upon work associated with support of the LAN, and Information Technology at the HECSA, and HQUSACE. He oversees the work associated with hardware repair, Help Desk support, UOC support, and after hours support. If you have any issues, concerns, and/or questions about the support being provided to you, please contact him at (202) 761-1070. He erroneously thinks that we call him Mr. C because he is cool. He isn't, and we don't think so. david.j.walton@usace.army.mil**, at (202) 761-1070.**